

September 25, 2007

The Honorable Carlos M. Gutierrez:
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th & Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Gutierrez:

I am writing in light of the announcement by the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that it recently enacted export control laws to prohibit unlicensed trafficking of "strategic goods" such as chemical and biological weaponry, military hardware, and dual-use items. While I am encouraged by this development, I would respectfully request that you report to me on your Department's efforts to ensure strict enforcement of these new laws and to update me periodically on the UAE's ongoing progress to that end. In particular, it is important to ascertain whether or not Abu Dhabi has developed sufficient expertise to implement such controls or if the United States should undertake a major training initiative for UAE export authorities.

Because the UAE serves as a major transshipment hub, I remain concerned about the UAE's potential for diverting highly sensitive U.S. technology to America's adversaries. Recent testimony by officials from the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) has clearly highlighted the significance of this issue in concrete terms. In response to my inquiries at a hearing of the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee on U.S. Iran policy, then-Acting Under Secretary of Commerce Mark Foulon described the UAE's unique role as a trading hub for goods and services bound for Iran. According to Secretary Foulon, Iran has established numerous trading companies in the UAE to procure U.S.-origin items, usually concealing the fact that the items are destined for Iran.

Such activities should not and cannot be tolerated. Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism, and is pursuing the alleged development of nuclear weapons technology. It is critically important that we use every tool in our arsenal— including training in export control enforcement, as needed— to prevent Tehran from further accumulating dangerous equipment that could eventually be used to threaten the stability of the region.

I thank you in advance for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
Chairman